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INFORMATION REPORT

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SUBJECT Slovenian Immigrants in Argentina

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1. Pre-war Immigrants

- a. Pre-war Slovenian immigrants in Argentina number about 20,000. They belong mainly to the uneducated classes and are mostly laborers and small merchants. They formed no political organization in Argentina, desiring only to earn and save enough money to return eventually to their homes in Slovenia. After the Communist victory in Yugoslavia, however, Yugoslav diplomats in Argentina acted energetically and before long most of the Slovenian pre-war immigrants were organized in various pro-Communist and pseudo-nationalistic groups throughout Argentina.
- b. This pro-Communist element followed the official Yugoslav government line which called for the return of the immigrants to Yugoslavia.

2. Post-war Immigrants

- a. Post-war Slovenian immigrants in Argentina number about 5000. Definitely anti-Communist, this group contains a large percentage of intellectuals and some pre-war Slovenian political organizers.
- b. This anti-Communist element did not adhere to the official Yugoslav government policy and did everything possible to facilitate and increase Slovenian immigration to Argentina.
- c. The post-war immigrants included representatives of all of the pre-war Slovenian political parties, the Clericals, Liberals and Socialists.
 - (1) Clericals are in the majority since the Slovenian Social Committee in Italy was careful to send to Argentina as the first post-war immigrants only individuals of proven Clerical party discipline (followers of the Clerical party leader, Dr. Miha Krek, who is now residing in the United States).
 - (2) Slovenian Liberals in Argentina are united in the Slovenian Democratic Group, which has about fifty members. The more prominent members of this group are Dr. Bojan Ribnikar, Dr. Marjan Zajec, Rudolf Zitnik, Dr. Vinko Zorc, Tugomer Prekorsek, and Dr. Franc Macus.

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- (3) Socialists are represented by Dr. Celestin Jelenc and Josip Grum, who both reside in Mendoza, Argentina.

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- d. The Slovenian Society in Buenos Aires is, [REDACTED] the only non-Communist Slovenian organization in Argentina. It includes about 400 out of the 5000 post-war anti-Communist immigrants. The Society was formed in January 1948 by representatives of the Clerical, Liberal and Socialist parties, with the Clerical in majority. Dr. Milos Stare, a follower of Dr. Krek, was elected president. In January 1949, a new election of executive members was held. Elected were:

Dr. Milos Stare, Clerical, President
 Janez Majersic, Clerical
 Joze Albreht, Clerical
 Father Ladislav Lencok, Clerical
 Albin Petelin, Clerical
 Albin Mozetic, Clerical
 Joze Lesar, Clerical
 Janez Kranjc, Clerical
 Ivan Znidar, Clerical
 Marko Bajuk, Clerical
 Dr. Bojan Ribnikar, Liberal
 Dr. Vojko Arko, Liberal
 Professor Vladimir Gorazd, Liberal

- e. The Slovenian Society is disunited. The January 1949 elections were not unanimous as some Clericals made an unorganized and unsuccessful attempt to oppose the official Clerical line. This opposing group, known as Straza, receives directions from Dr. Ciril Zebot who resides in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Prominent Straza members are I. Fasun and (fnu) Korosec. Others who oppose Dr. Milos Stare and the Clerical party line are Father Karel Skulj, a reported war criminal who is priest of the Martinez Parish near Buenos Aires, and Father Franc Glavac, an OVRA and Gestapo collaborator.

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- f. The Domobran group in Argentina is headed by Vuk and Evgen Rupnik, sons of the Slovenian Quisling General Lav Rupnik. [REDACTED] this group aspires to a prominent role in any future Slovenian military organization. A Dr. (fnu) Benedicic is their advocate in public.

3. Slovenian Publications in Argentina

- a. The pro-Communist Slovenian publications are Slovenski Emigrantski Vilestnik (pro-Tito) and Slovenski Emigrantski Glas (pro-Cominform). Both of these papers are reported to be badly edited and in opposition to each other. Because of this, according to source, both are harming the cause of Communism in Argentina.
- b. Svobodna Slovenija is the anti-Communist Slovene paper in Argentina. It is edited by a private concern headed by Dr. Milos Stare and Ruda Jurcec, Clericals.

4. Reaction of Pre-war Immigrants to Post-war Immigrants

- a. At first, under Communist influence, the uneducated and nearly de-nationalized pre-war immigrants considered the post-war immigrants to be deserters, traitors

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and reactionaries. Gradually, however, as the numbers of post-war immigrants increased and they observed that the post-war immigrants were well-behaved honest workers, their hostile attitude changed to one of bewilderment. In addition, individuals who had returned to Yugoslavia under the influence of Communist propaganda wrote letters to Argentina, explaining what conditions in post-war Yugoslavia were really like. Some of these individuals managed to escape from Yugoslavia and return to Argentina, bringing personal accounts of conditions in Yugoslavia.

- b. The Tito-Cominform split, although it caused much concern, did not bring about an immediate reaction among the pre-war immigrants. On the other hand, the post-war anti-Communist immigrants were unable or unwilling or afraid to exploit the profitable situation. Instead of converting the pre-war immigrant group from Communism and taking over their organizations at the same time, the anti-Communist leaders remained passive.

5. Relations of Slovenian Immigrants in Argentina with Slovenians in Other Parts of the World

- a. The Slovenian National Committee is the supreme Slovenian political authority in exile and is recognized by the majority of the Slovenian immigrants. Dr. Miha Krek is the president. The following members of the Committee live in Buenos Aires: Dr. Milos Stare, Professor Bogumil Remec, and Dr. Franc Bajlec, Clericals; Dr. Marjan Zajec and Rudolf Zitnik, Liberals; and Dr. Celestin Jelenc, Socialists. Dr. Krek, who is a Clerical, often acts as an independent leader without previously consulting the other members of the Committee, which the Liberals in Argentina do not like. Furthermore, the Committee members in Argentina consider that a single Yugoslav Committee is being formed in the United States instead of separate Slovenian, Croat and Serbian Committees. They have, therefore, attempted to persuade Dr. Krek to issue a joint declaration to Slovenian immigrants, confirming the continuation of Yugoslavia after its liberation from Communism. Dr. Krek has refused to permit this, maintaining that the time has not yet arrived to make such a definite declaration concerning the future of Slovenia.
- b. Dr. Vinko Zorc is the Slovenian Liberal representative to the Liberal International in London.

- 25X1A 6. Present Status of Communism Among Slovenian Immigrants. The pro-Communist Slovenian group in Argentina is undergoing a gradual process of de-Communization. [redacted] if properly handled, the process might go on even faster. But the leaders of the anti-Communist element are both passive and reactionary. They are unable to organize and unite their own group in Argentina to fight Communism. [redacted] in a free Yugoslavia, or Slovenia, they will be unable to organize and influence the people at home who are now suffering under the Communist regime and who have no contacts with their pre-war political leaders. Yet these ex-leaders pretend to be the only legitimate representatives of the anti-Communist political group in Slovenia.

- 25X1A 7. In conclusion, [redacted] the potentially useful Slovenian immigrant group in Argentina, with its intellectual and numerical strength, is not being used properly against the weakened pro-Communist Slovenian element in Argentina. He believes the fault lies entirely with the incapable political leaders of the anti-Communist group who are too conservative to effectively combat the Communist revolutionists among the immigrants.

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